

the various lodges and their adoption of the plan. According to some recently published statements anent the controversy between the medical society of Shasta county and a local lodge, it would seem that the method of compensation suggested would not only save the self-respect of the physician, but actually be an economy to the lodge, for the latter claimed to have had only three sick members in a period of several months.

Another community which is to be congratulated upon the activity of its health officer is Sacramento. Dr. Fay, of that city, **VALUABLE** has urged and recently secured the **ORDINANCE.** passage of an ordinance prohibiting the offering for sale of undrawn fish or poultry. The text of the new requirement is published elsewhere in the JOURNAL and should receive careful reading by every health officer in the state. A public, ignorant of the dangers which it knows not, is liable to do many dangerous things. Large quantities of undrawn poultry are shipped into this state, and it not infrequently becomes tainted before sold. The newspapers, last November, reported the condemnation of several cars of tainted turkeys in Los Angeles and stated that the poor people struggled to obtain them, even in a very bad condition. Doubtless much sickness and possibly death would have resulted from the eating of these tainted fowl.

Very encouraging reports come from Sonoma county, where the plan of having frequent meetings has been undertaken after the suggestion of Dr. McCormack. The **WEEKLY** JOURNAL has just been advised that **MEETINGS.** in Santa Rosa meetings are held every week at the office of the president, Dr. Stuart, and that a similar plan has been followed in Healdsburg, where the members of the local profession meet weekly and report very enthusiastically on the good accomplished. This plan of frequent meetings devoted to practical study and work cannot be too highly commended to every other county society in the state. When the general public comes to learn that county medical societies are not "medical trusts," but that they are the centers of medical education and that the result of the work done in the county society is a direct and important benefit to the public, we will find that many of the dissensions and altercations between physicians and laymen will cease. The general public suffers much more from the ignorance which almost invariably is to be found in a dormant or a quarreling medical profession than do the physicians themselves. If the public knows that the county medical society is such an important organization, educationally, that no good physician could possibly get along without being a member of it, the lodge practice evil will come to an end. But these highly desirable results cannot be secured by a mere paper organization; the physicians of the county *must* get together frequently and *must work*.

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP.

We take pleasure in reprinting a paper read by Mr. Wibert before the Philadelphia County Medical Society dealing in a peculiarly clear manner with the nostrum business. In the discussion of this paper, as printed in the *Journal A. M. A.*, are some opinions well worth your careful consideration. Here is Dr. S. Solis Cohen's opinion: "If the members of the profession confine their subscriptions and articles to those journals with perfectly clean (advertising) columns, all the other medical journals will fall into line." And again, listen to Dr. Alfred Stengel's idea on the subject: "Dr. Alfred Stengel agreed with Dr. Cohen in the idea of withholding subscriptions or articles from journals advertising such nostrums as are excluded from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*."

Curiously enough the Boston medical society had a meeting just about this time, the whole session being devoted to a discussion of the nostrum and "proprietary" question, which was opened by Dr. Frank Billings of Chicago. The discussion was exceedingly interesting, but is, unfortunately, too long to reprint. Dr. Richard C. Cabot, president, closed the session with the following pregnant comment. "Dr. Cabot suggested one other remedy (of the nostrum evil), namely: *If the 200 or 300 physicians who are contributors of articles to the best medical journals would refuse to allow their papers to be printed in any journal which admits nostrums to its advertising pages, their influence might be decisive.*"

In view of these opinions it is indeed astonishing to see that such men as Nicholas Senn, Frederick C. Shattuck, James M. Anders, Jefferson R. Kean and Rudolph Matas will permit themselves to be used to lend an air of dignity to the *New York Medical Journal*, a publication which not only prints pages and pages of nostrum advertisements, but which has actually gone out of its way and openly opposed the American Medical Association and its work through the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry. Of this "Advisory editorial staff," Dr. Senn is an ex-president of the American Medical Association and Dr. Shattuck has been spoken of as a presidential possibility; Dr. Jefferson R. Kean is a distinguished officer in the Medical Corps of the United States Army, and Dr. Matas is known to all.

Gentlemen, are you going to continue to lend your moral support to the *New York Medical Journal* in its somewhat more than tacit opposition to the American Medical Association's efforts to secure some slight element of decency in medical advertising? Ponder upon these things, you distinguished gentlemen of the "Advisory editorial staff" of the *New York Medical Journal*; is your attitude exactly consistent? (The list of the "Advisory editorial staff," published in the first issue of the year, is not to be found in recent issues; can it be that these distinguished gentlemen have realized their error and withdrawn from their peculiar position?)

#### DISCUSSIONS.

Too often the discussion of papers read before medical societies is perfectly aimless and excessively tiresome. Discussion should be short, directly relevant to the particular problem under discussion, and not reminiscent. Unless a comment has equal dignity with the paper, and offers as much to the elucidation of the problem, it has no purpose and is valueless. Too many medical men have the notion that they must say something or the spectators will imagine them to be ignorant of the subject; in this particular the surgeons are the greatest sinners. This sort of dry and aimless discussion, which reminds one of the desultory remarks at an experience meeting of the old revival order, is most tiresome and is ruinous to the best interests of any medical society.